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The Cry of a Distant Butterfly

's Greetings Season's Greeting

By Taro Ivy

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The self diagon⁵é sits by the window
shivering again.

Always getting caught up in the words,
never leaving himself room to breathe,
and the cigarettes taste like rotten fruit.

I'm in 7 tonight and i've numbed myself to the
the whole thing, it's just routine at this
point.

I'm in my own world now, the puppeteer cut
from his strings.

There goes pinocchio again,
always on about unsewn cloth and unplanted
harvests.

About all you'd ever see him do was sit in the
field and watch cows go on through their day.

He ~~knew~~ all the dramas of the heard,

he ~~knew~~ all the faces of the clouds.

He gave them names and favourite colors and
said,

"You are the creatures of my creation,
Watch me dance," and he'd dance

He did this all so that one day he could watch



-them drift off and collide with distant stars.

He always thought of art as some sort of cosmic pollution, creation for the sake of it.

"Art is masturbation," He'd say.

He picked feathers from wounded birds, attached them to his clothes, and began hanging around the flocks.

"When that didn't work out he slid from town to town on travel busses.

There's a certain high you can only get from the shifting postal codes.

He'd sit in hotel rooms and write screenplays for cancelled pilots.

He'd smoke cigarettes out the hotel windows and skip town the next day.

That's about all the trace he'd leave in any one place.

He loved to steal dream catchers, chase alley cats, and look into mirrors and ask, "What have I become?"

He loved realising you can't out run yourself and he'd get right back to the course all the same.

He loved the cyclical nature of his drifting existence.

Befriend the hamster wheel.

One day, he followed a flock of moths
through the woods, to a council of bullfrogs,
sitting on lillypads on the backwater of a
long creek.

They exchanged waf stories, apple crumble recipi-
es, and talked longingly of the old American
west.

On the bed of the creek sat a composite of
clay, which had been carved into a scandenavian
village, probably by sharp currents.

Complete with a motel, a pool hall, an infirmary
, limestone dragonflies and a motivated work
-force.

"My god look at that kid, all he ever doe^s
is sit there and stare at us with his cold
bug eyes, and smoke cigarettes." Said one
bull-frog, in an ancient drone.

"It's like he's trying to smoke out his
organs. One of these days they're gonna
crawl out of his skin." The other replied.



So Pinocchio walked away with watery eyes. The council closed, they weren't proud of themselves.

"Why do you always have to take that tone? Scaring people away. So what hes a little different? Aren't we all?"

Said one bull-frog, the other just sighed.

The boy walked on down the dirt path. When it grew dark he lit matches to find his footing.

He had found in the past that it is much harder to rest than to continue, and even harder to start again when the time comes..



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So he walked on through the night until reaching morning, where he fell asleep beneath a ficus tree.

The night is no task for a sleeping man. It requires a certain vigilance to face.

But in the mornings, he found, he could rest.

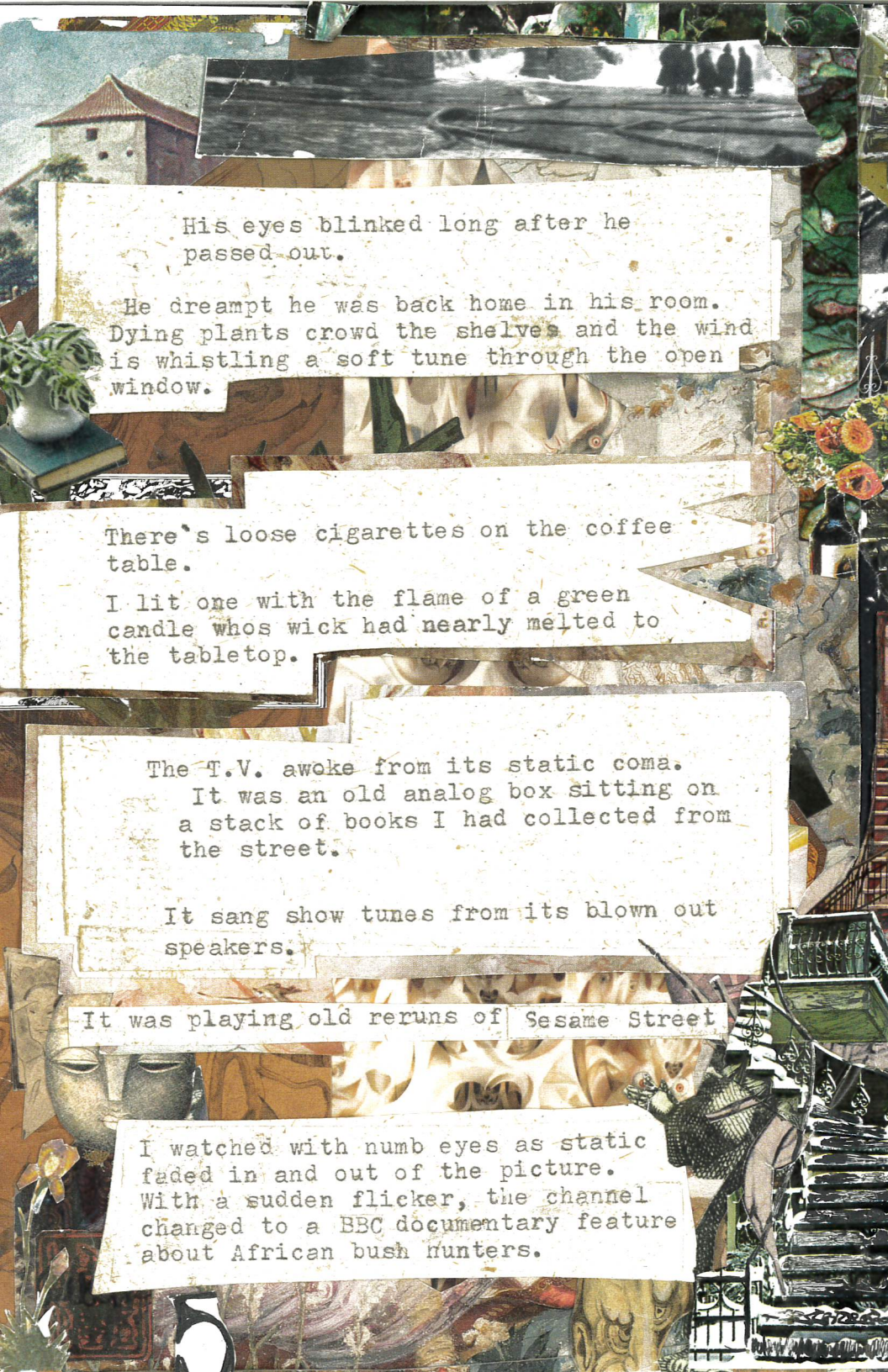
The mornings were a gentle time.

A quiet place where the skies bleed watercolor.

Where time moves a little slower, and the winds bear no fruit.

Where a best-friend is forever, and naked babies sleep in the clouds.





His eyes blinked long after he
passed out.

He dreamt he was back home in his room.
Dying plants crowd the shelves and the wind
is whistling a soft tune through the open
window.

There's loose cigarettes on the coffee
table.

I lit one with the flame of a green
candle whos wick had nearly melted to
the tabletop.

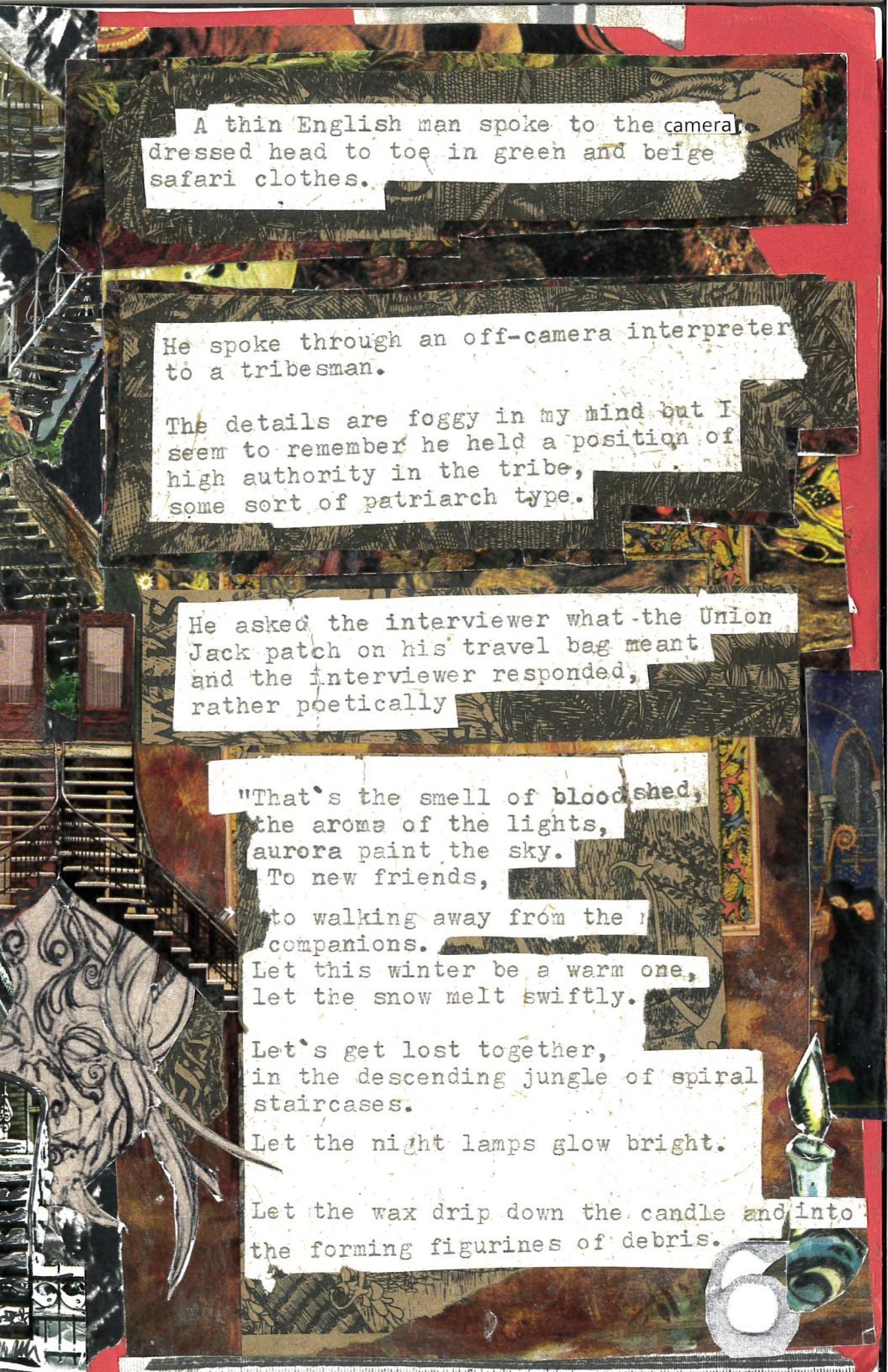
The T.V. awoke from its static coma.

It was an old analog box sitting on
a stack of books I had collected from
the street.

It sang show tunes from its blown out
speakers.

It was playing old reruns of Sesame Street

I watched with numb eyes as static
faded in and out of the picture.
With a sudden flicker, the channel
changed to a BBC documentary feature
about African bush hunters.



A thin English man spoke to the camera
dressed head to toe in green and beige
safari clothes.

He spoke through an off-camera interpreter
to a tribesman.

The details are foggy in my mind but I
seem to remember he held a position of
high authority in the tribe,
some sort of patriarch type.

He asked the interviewer what the Union
Jack patch on his travel bag meant
and the interviewer responded,
rather poetically

"That's the smell of blood shed,
the aroma of the lights,
aurora paint the sky.
To new friends,

to walking away from the
companions.

Let this winter be a warm one,
let the snow melt swiftly.

Let's get lost together,
in the descending jungle of spiral
staircases.

Let the night lamps glow bright.

Let the wax drip down the candle and into
the forming figurines of debris.



Beyond the blinded window,
stray dogs sat by the trash-fire
and talked about yesterday afternoons.

Some of the old days in the fighting rings,
some of the racetracks,
some of escaping dog-catchers
or hoping frights in the depression.

Now they wasted away with each other,
waiting out the golden age.

Their little crew carried a bitter air.
They cursed their lives for its simplicity.
They envied humans for all the decisions
they got to make.

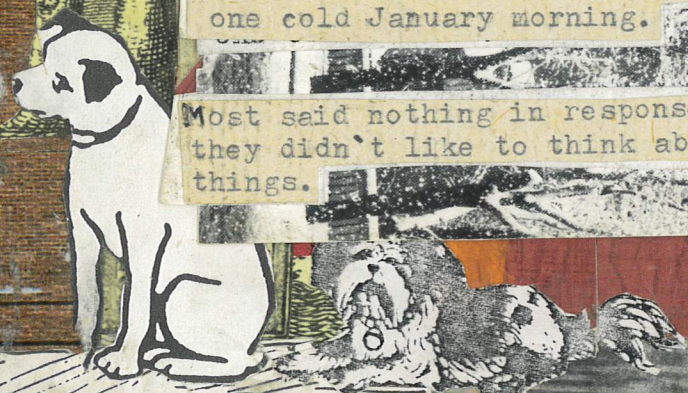
"Do you figure it's warm on the moon?"

Asked one dog.

His name was Roxy, a tall mut with long
knotted fur.

He still wore a collar from the family
he lived with before he ran away
one cold January morning.

Most said nothing in response,
they didn't like to think about such
things.



"There's an abandoned apartment building
a few streets down from here,
its backdoor is usually propped open
with a pile of bricks.

Next played a ball...
Sometimes I walk up all the stairs and
sleep on the roof. It's warm up there
and I can watch the night sky up close.
The constellations feel like a blanket
on my fur and I soak in the cosmic bathtub
while watching this.

*Ensemble la description des villes de ce
demeurent.*

Maybe it's so warm up there because it's
-s so close to the moon."

One replied, from the other side of
the fire.

But dogs aren't supposed to be poetic
so they all went to sleep, empty minded.
The wind howled silently."

He spoke as if to an audience of upper-class
house wives and gay divorcees and seemed to lose
track of his thoughts somewhere along the line.

With that the program closed, it seems they saw the question as an opportunity for closing remarks.

Next played a hallucinating string of commercials, the first for camouflaged decals for assault rifles. Then supplements that encourage finger-nail growth. Next played a grainy infomercial for a local funeral and crematorium.

I felt strangely warm while watching this. It reeked of nostalgia.

My cigarette burnt out, I lit another from the table.

The air already beginning to smell like its distinct medley of Salvation Army rags and retirement home.

The T.V switched to an urgent newscast. It seemed outdated and may have even been in another language, but I watched anyways.

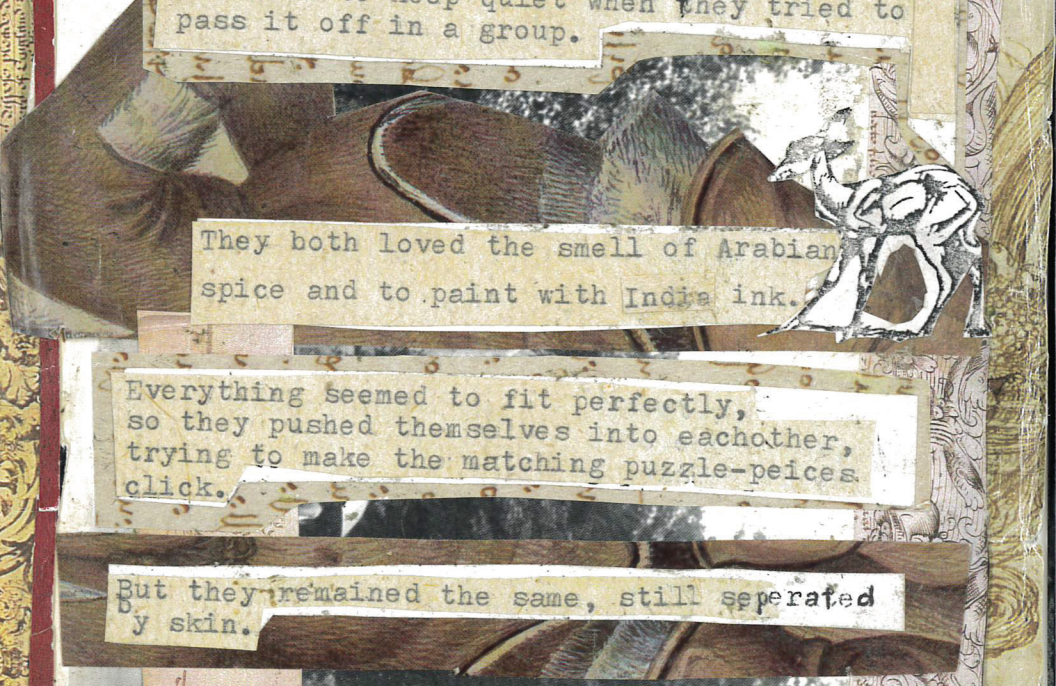
as the idea to change the channel continually slipped from my mind.

It was a human interest story on two fawns from feuding herds who had escaped a forest fire together.



They were the only survivors from either
heard so from this day on all they had was
eachother.

And quickly, they got to know one another
They could tell when the other was
trying to be funny,
and knew to keep quiet when they tried to
pass it off in a group.



They both loved the smell of Arabian
spice and to paint with India ink.

Everything seemed to fit perfectly,
so they pushed themselves into eachother,
trying to make the matching puzzle-peices
click.

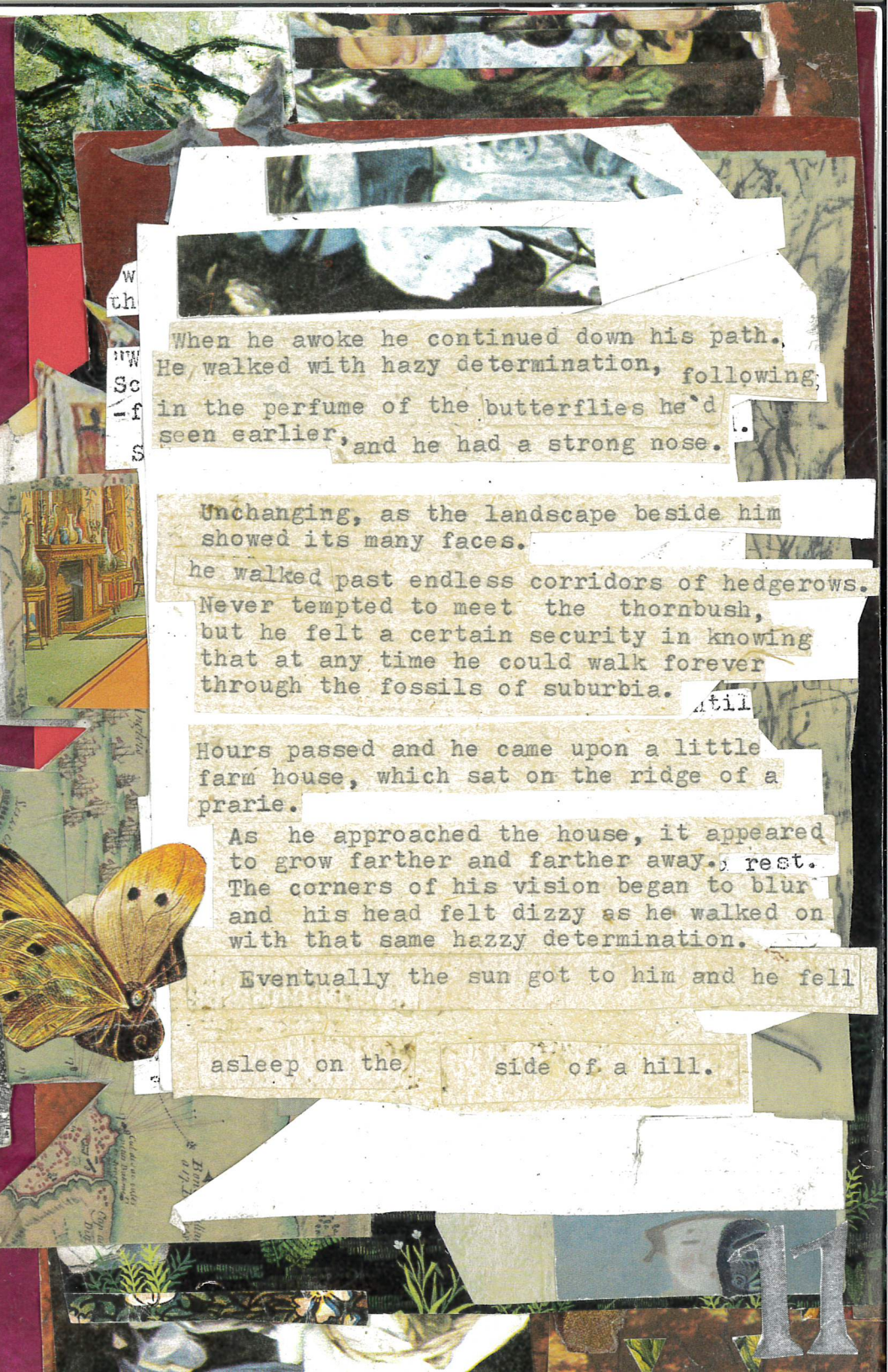
But they remained the same, still seperated
y skin.

I set the soundtrack of the report in
the background as I drifted asleep on my
old brown couch. The same couch where I'd
first played with the poem, first fallen in love,

where I'd met the fox of autumn, and cleaned
paint brushes

in the hot summer night.





When he awoke he continued down his path. He walked with hazy determination, following in the perfume of the butterflies he'd seen earlier, and he had a strong nose.

Unchanging, as the landscape beside him showed its many faces.

he walked past endless corridors of hedgerows. Never tempted to meet the thornbush, but he felt a certain security in knowing that at any time he could walk forever through the fossils of suburbia.

Hours passed and he came upon a little farm house, which sat on the ridge of a prairie.

As he approached the house, it appeared to grow farther and farther away. rest. The corners of his vision began to blur and his head felt dizzy as he walked on with that same hazy determination.

Eventually the sun got to him and he fell

asleep on the side of a hill.

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“As He Approached the house it appeared
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When Pinnochio awoke, the farmer whos plot
hed fallen asleep in that morning was hovering
above him. It was now early afternoon.
It took a while for his eyes to put a name
to what stood before him. The farmer towered
over the boy, blocking the setting sun.
He wore clothes seasoned by labour.
Blue jeans with holes in each knee.
and dirt stains running up the sides of
both legs.
A tattered flannel shirt, once weather-proofed
, now torn up by moth holes, and tall platform
rain boots.

The farmer snapped his fingers and waved his
hand in his face in an attempt to wake the
boy who'd already begun nodding off again.

He shot into conciousness, shivering
like a rodeo clown.
The farmer stood there patiently with
the temperament of an old bull. Long retired
from fighting, unbothered by the waving flag.

As the boy collected himself the farmer
asked if he knew where he was or which day
of the week it was.

The boy replied with indistinct mumbles, he
kept a vague coherency.

The mumbles continued unprompted by the
farmer until the boy finally asked ,,
with a suddeb clarity.

"Do you know why it is the winds changed directions?"

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He thought about it for a moment,
keeping a blank face.
The famer wondered why he would ask
such a thing, under these strange
circumstances.

He wondered how he had come to this stretch
of woods in the first place, and why
he'd chosen his obscure obscure plot
of land to rest.

He decided the boy was probably in a
state of shock and required immediate
medical attention. With the nearest clinician
a three days trip away, he would have
to serve as practitioner and with no
medical training of any kind, he came to
realise his greatest contribution would
be to the music of the conversation.





"When someone has lived the same life
for too long, they get comfortable and
grow attached to the unchanging hour.

They know of nothing but perfume and the
smell of stale cigarettes.

They want only to stay home and escape
to the same worlds day in and day out.

They know nothing but to follow the formula they
discovered instinctively months ago.



They've forgotten the recipe of the stars.
When it becomes obvious this is happening,
when inspiration becomes simply a peripheral
sensation, the gods send a wind from the far-
en ds of the earth."







"I guess i've never thought of it
it that way." The boy replied.

He'd never really thought of it
much at all so although confused,
he was satisfied with the answer.

"What are you doing all the way
out here anyway?"

The farmer asked after a brief lull.

"I was following a flock of distant
butterflies, don't you hear them
call?,"

The boy replied, as if asking a question so
obvious it didn't need to be asked at all.

They sat and listened for the
butterflies faint cries,
but none came.

"Either way, it's not really about
the butterflies anymore. I decided
long ago that this was my path,
and this is who I am. That I
would never belong to any one place.
I wouldn't know what to do with
myself if I turned around now."





The farmer was confused by this, hed never gone very far from his small plot of land

"I suppose winds change directions." He replied.

"I suppose they do," and the boy went on his way, the sun fell behind his shoulder, and he's back to the canvas of time.



Iris □ Caroline

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